

Landis argument, he had three basic ones that I picked up. He said a deal has been struck. If you change the board member representation, we will let you increase the levy. Well, maybe that is the way we should legislate here but I don't see that being proper. I think we should consider both issues in this bill on their own merit. Now he also stated that the state obligated the NRDs to do certain things, and that is correct. That is correct. So, in my opinion, that is a very good argument for having the state fund those. Have the state fund them, the state has said that the NRDs should do certain things so that should logically be a state, rather than a property tax, method of funding those operations. He also said it is a small increase in the levy. I disagree. It is 28 percent. It is a 28 percent increase in the property tax levy for those NRDs. Going from 3 1/2 cents up to 4 1/2 cents is almost 30 percent. It is over 28 percent increase in the levy. Now, where in this Legislature are we going to increase our expenditures, increase our taxing 28 percent? That is exactly what it is, 28 percent increase. I don't think we have sufficiently investigated the opportunities for funding the functions that the NRDs are called upon and so I would ask that the amendment be adopted and, Mr. Chairman, I would like to give the rest of my time to Senator Rupp.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you, Senator Lamb. Senator Rupp, you have approximately 2 1/2 minutes.

SENATOR RUPP: Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I also am sorry that the matter of timing this morning, that we happen to be coming up on lunch, and maybe some people are hungry and we want to dispose of this one way or the other and get out of here. But I will guarantee you this is not an issue that we are going to do quickly, because if this amendment to the amendment is not adopted, I will reluctantly make a motion to indefinitely postpone this bill at some later date because I can't believe...I think probably some members of the body are not fully aware of exactly what all is in this, and a lot of the bill is good. A lot of the bill I have no problems with. It will increase, I think, responsibility and accountability and interest in some of these boards, but I think we are putting the cart before the horse here saying that we are also going to allow them to raise this property tax levy by 28 percent, as Senator Lamb says. I have numerous experiences with NRDs in my district which I will share with you some other day when we have more time. I am not going to talk about the concept of NRDs now. I guess we know that there are 24 of them and they range